

6

A  
T R E A T I S E  
O N T H E  
U S E and M A N A G E M E N T  
O F A  
R A Z O R ;  
W I T H  
P R A C T I C A L D I R E C T I O N S  
Relative to its  
A P P E N D A G E S.

~~~~~  
By J. SAVIGNY,  
RAZOR-MAKER to His MAJESTY,  
Instrument-Maker to St. GEORGE'S-HOSPITAL,  
And  
INVENTOR of the CONVEX-PENKNIVES.  
~~~~~

L O N D O N :

Printed for the A U T H O R, and Sold at his Shop in  
*Pall-Mall, near the Hay-Market.*

THE LATEST

ON THE  
USE AND MANAGEMENT



R  
O  
R

W  
I  
T  
H  
PRACTICAL DIRECTIONS  
Relative to its  
300 46

APPROVED

By J. SAVIGNY,  
Razor-Maker to His Majesty.

INVENTOR OF THE CONVEY-PERMANENT

LONDON

Printed by J. Smith, at the 'Penny Press', No. 1, St. Paul's Churchyard, London.

**I** Flatter myself that I need make very little Apology for the Defects of Style &c. which most likely will be discovered in the following Pages; judging, that as these may be naturally expected, so they will be readily excused in the Man, who writes more from the Nature of his Business, than that of his Education, and I flatter my Self, that those for whom this little Treatise is chiefly intended, will not take Offence at my attempting to give Instructions on so trifling a Subject; it being one of those Species of Knowledge, (however convenient) of which it is no Disqualification in a Gentleman to be ignorant; Therefore hope, if what is here set down be in any Measure productive of a Conveniency, which hath been sought after, that this Attempt will be favourably received by those, whom I am ambitious to Please; more especially, as I resolve not to mislead any one who may favour it with a Perusal, by supposed Advantages in any particular Method, which neither Reason or Experience will countenance. Thus the Glare of abstruse Conjectures and strained Conclusions concerning the Effects of Nature, (which may sometimes be received as Proofs of a deep discerning Mind,) will

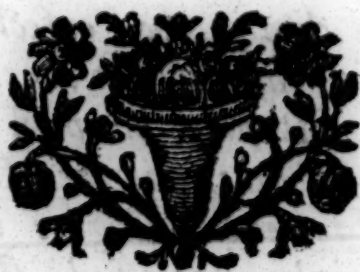
*will seem wanting; this, however, I can the more readily yield to, being much less solicitous to appear Wiser than I am, than less Honest than I should, and shall not be so much dissatisfied in being known to want some of that Knowledge which the Undertaking required, than in being suspected of Disingenuity in what I advance.*

*It is an Observation within the Scope of every one's Notice, that most People discover a Desire of being informed by the Persons with whom they Deal, concerning the Management, Use, and Application, of the Articles they have Occasion to purchase; this is particularly the Case with respect to Razors; but I fear, the Interrogations thereon, are answered for the most Part with so bad a Grace, (and this for want of an Ability, which I conceive, is very excusable in Mechanics,) that very few judge so favorably of our Instructions, as to suppose them worth retaining; I am convinced however, I have reason to complain of this Deficiency in myself, which was one Motive that resolved me on this Attempt, which with all its Faults, I hope will be somewhat better, than any  
Thing*



Thing I could say, when I had not the Opportunity of Time to preponderate the Subject, and Place my Thoughts in some Degree of Order. It is certain if the Instructions necessary to be given with Respect to Razors, do not influence a Gentleman's regard, he may be often excited to a Condemnation of them; when perhaps, and too frequently, a judicious Application would have intitled them to his Approbation, in which Case, it is as impossible, but that the Tradesman's Character must suffer, as it is to make a Razor or any other Instrument effect it's Purpose, without regard being had to that particular Method, which only can impower it to act; this I hope to be able to demonstrate, by some familiar Instances in the following Pages; for the present, I shall only observe, that tho' (from secret Causes in Nature) it may sometimes happen, that the most circumspect Workman may miss his Aim in the Perfecting of a Razor, still it is reasonable to conclude, that, as this Branch of Business has been exercised such a Number of Years, and the Methods of tempering Steel to every Degree of Hardness, are so certainly established, the too common  
Failure

*Failure thereof, is more likely to be accounted for in an undue Application, than in any Inability or Remissness in the Maker; If this be credited, I trust it will suggest a sufficient excuse for an Attempt of this kind; as while the Inconvenience appeared amendable, it could not but seem reasonable to endeavour to point out the Remedy. And tho' probably, many of my Brethren of the Trade may be more capable of the Task, yet as no one has hitherto undertaken it, I hope my being the first in the Attempt, will not create any unfriendly Impressions in them, especially, as one of my principal Endeavours, is to lessen the Odium of Insufficiency in the Razor Makers, and remove the Cause, from which I judge, their Characters have sustained some Damage.*



## C H A P. I.

## Of the C H O I C E of R A Z O R S.

**T**H E Choice of Razors, I imagine, is a Circumstance of much less Concern to a Gentleman, than the Choice of the Person of whom he means to buy them ; and he who fixes well with regard to the Latter, need give himself very little Trouble about the other ; for if the Seller is a Man acquainted with the manufacturing, and a Person of any Degree of Reputation, he will not (unless he be an absolute Fool) suffer any Gentleman to make choice of a Razor which he has any Reason to suspect will not succeed ; and this for two Reasons, the one, that he is liable to suffer in the Opinion of his Customer, which must appear a Matter in which his Interest is more connected, than in selling a bad Razor for a good Price ; and the other, that he entails a Trouble upon himself, not a little disagreeable, and not at all Advantageous ; I mean the exchanging of Razors : And I believe I may venture to answer for the whole Fraternity, who are really the Manufacturers, that there is not one but is willing to exchange Razors which do not meet with Approbation, and repeat the like, (allowing for any Damage they may have sustain'd in their Trials)



'till the Purchaser is sufficiently contented with his Bargain ; which in Fact, is the only Method whereby we can depend upon giving Satisfaction, for it has not been found hitherto, that even good Razors are generally so ; that is, a Razor which will retain its Edge a long While, and cut exceedingly smooth with some Faces, will perform very indifferently when applied to others ; of which I have known repeated Instances. I am not capable of ascertaining to any Degree of Precision, to what Cause this may be alledged, but it seems very probable, that the lax, or compacted Condition of the Beard, may require an Edge of a moderate or higher Degree of Temper.

Perhaps what may have contributed not a little to raising a general Distrust of the Veracity of Razor-Makers, is the very indifferent Work Gentlemen meet with, under the specious Title of "*Tried and Approved Razors*;" which is often published, and every Day exhibited in the Shops of Traders of all Denominations in this Metropolis: It is easy to conceive, that People of Trades so little connected with the vending of Razors as all these are, could not attempt to appropriate to themselves this Branch of Business, but from Views the most sordid and grasping ; and under the Direction of such Principles, it cannot well be supposed, that they would afford the Man who works for them, such a Price



as might enable him (admitting his Abilities sufficient) to perfect his Work with that Attention and Care it requires: I could not forbear upon this Occasion, to mention these Grievances, which our Trade has long in Silence laboured under; and which it remains for us to hope, will be discountenanced by those Gentlemen, in whom alone the Remedy subsists.

It appears by what has been said, that the Choice of a Razor may be quite as well left to the Maker, as determined by the Purchaser: However it sometimes happens, that (exclusive of its Goodness) the Weight, the Fulness, the Poise, &c. &c. of a Razor, are Circumstances which seem to claim Acquaintance with particular Hands; and with Regard to these, every one will do well to suit himself.

I have lately ventured, notwithstanding the long established Notion, that Weight is a very requisite Property in a Razor, to recommend those that are very deficient in this Respect; for which I will take this Opportunity to offer my Reasons.

Perceiving that Weight and Magnitude were Properties that could not fail to render a Gentleman's Equipage very burthensome, I have in all my Plans, confined myself to a very small Scale; I found however, it was impossible to contrive any Thing that would be no ways inconvenient in the Pocket, unless I reduced the

common Size of Razors ; and considering thereof, I convinced myself this might be effected, without circumscribing in any Measure their Utility.

It does not appear upon considering by what Means a Razor acts, that its Ponderosity can be very assisting in the Operation, the Performance depending upon the Conditions of its Edge abstractedly from its Weight. Weight can only assist when Force is requisite ; as for Example ; in dividing a tough Piece of Stick, we shall find that the Edge of a Knife (however sharp) cannot make its Way through ; it therefore becomes necessary to give it a smart Stroke with the Arm, and by means of accelerating the Motion of the Instrument, which is nothing more than applying it with an Increase of Weight it becomes equal to the Task : The Weight of all cutting Instruments, should be adapted according to the Nature of their acting ; and thus if the Beard could be only hewn or chopped off, certainly a Hatchet with a sharp Edge, would answer the Purpose better than a Razor. On the contrary, if the Beard may be erased by an unforced Incision, (which is certainly the Case) an Instrument of no considerable Weight with a proper Edge, will always deserve the Preference ; for the Hand having nothing to overcome in point of Weight, performs with much more exactness and ease, than it possibly can when it feels

feels the Oppression of Weight in the Instrument it is to manage.

I judge it cannot be thought any Advantage to a Scythe, whose Business bears some Similarity to that of a Razor, to be very massy ; as it will appear on the slightest Consideration, that the severing of the Plant is effected by the keenness of the Edge, without the Assistance of any more Weight than it partakes of, in being applied to the Grass ; nor can it be supposed, that the Falcation would be in the least facilitated, by the Addition of any Degree of Weight whatever, to the Scythe : Hence it appears, that with respect to those Substances which have not solid Strength to resist a Sharp Edge, (and the Beard is certainly one of those) heaviness is no essential Quality in the Instrument used upon them. The Penknife might be also instanced on this Occasion, being an Instrument which Acts independent of Weight : Many other Examples could be added, but these will be sufficient to prove, that in all unforced Incisions, a proper Edge will be able to perform its Business without any Assistance from Weight of Metal.

I cannot forbear recommending the Razors made of Cast-Steel, in Preference to all other, they being much better united in their Substance, much less disfigured with Foulness and drossy Veins, and always (when wrought with that extraordinary Care which this Steel particularly  
(requires



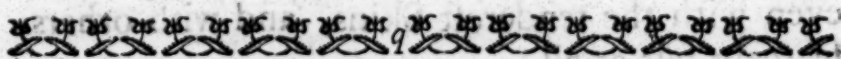
requires) free from those visible Pores, which cannot fail to affect the Delicacy of the Edge, and which it is very rare indeed, to find any other Steel free from.

There are Some, who entertain Doubts concerning the Reality of Cast-Steel; and I have heard it asserted, " There could be no such Thing as Cast-Steel-Razors, and if there were, " it would be impossible they could be good." This Conjecture, false as it is, seems notwithstanding, to have had a reasonable Motive; as I suppose it must have arisen from a Mistake, which many Razor-Makers have over-looked, having affixed to their Signs "*Cast Steel Razors made here.*" Which Term doubtless, may be very well thought to convey a Notion, that the Razors themselves were actually cast in a Mould, in the Shape and Substance they appear in; and if this was the Case, they would be good for very little indeed: However, I would have it understood, that what is thereby meant, are RAZORS made of CAST STEEL, such as are manufactured from the Bar of Steel, which has undergone the Process of Fusion, and by being mixed with some well chosen Substances, is very much purified from all drossy Matter, which therefore cannot fail to effect a closer Union of solid

Particles.



Particles. The extraordinary Resistance this Steel has against the Hammer, (which those who have work'd it must be convinced of) is a demonstrative Proof of its compactedness, and shews its superiority to all other, partaking less of the Quality of Iron; on which Account, it is very natural to apprehend, that an Edge made thereof, must be more resistable and lasting, than that of common Steel. I will only add, that the Difference between a Razor made of Cast Steel and one of common Steel, may be easily perceived by looking attentively on each.



## CHAP. II.

O F

S O P E

A N D

## SHAVING-POWDER.

**T**HERE are several Sorts of Sope at present in Request; and tho' I cannot distinguish by any particular Name, which is best for Use, yet this may be depended on, that That is most suitable for the Purpose which infuses itself most  
in

in the Water, and makes a Lather of the greatest Consistence, and such as will support itself the longest after the Action of the Hand ceases that made it : And I fancy that all other Distinctions of Sope, are chiefly on Account of their odoriferous Qualities ; and with Respect to these, the Nose must be every One's Arbitrator.

As Lather is the proper Vehicle of the Beard, the more copiously it is applied, the less painful the Operation will be ; for by this the Task of the Razor is much eased, and the Pain the Face sometimes suffers, will be very supportable even with the tenderest Skins, and with others, scarcely felt at all.

Previous however to the applying the Lather, I would recommend the washing of the Face thoroughly with warm Water & Sope, (in hot Weather cold may do) and wiping it quite dry, as if that Part of Dress was finished ; by this Method, any little Particles of Dust, that imperceptibly settle about the Beard, (and which cannot fail to dull the Edge of a Razor) are removed, the Beard is softened, and the Skin is in a sort rendered insensible of the Scissure which is to follow : Whether I may be exactly right in the Manner of my accounting for the Means of procuring Ease by this Method, I will not take upon me to determine by any other Rule than my own Conjectures : I am thoroughly convinced

vinced however, that it is an infallable Way to lessen the Pain felt in shaving ; and which I am persuaded every one will be confirmed in, who judges so favorably of my Advice as to afford it an Experiment.

SHAVING POWDER is an Article in much Esteem, and as a small Quantity only is required at a Time, it is rendered very portable, and being always used with a Brush, is accounted more cleanly than Sope ; & these are I believe all the Commendations it deserves ; for those who have tried both, have generally found, that the Lather raised from Sope exceeds that of the Powder, and being applied with the Hand, never fails to soften the Hair in a much greater Degree than the Brush is capable of : This Advantage however, will appear to some to have very little Weight, as when the Face is not tender and the Hair not obstinately hard, no other Precaution is necessary, than just to mind that the Razor is in a Condition to cut, and properly applied for that Purpose ; and whether the Lather be raised from Sope or Powder, administered with the Hand or with the Brush, will be to them a Matter of very little Concern ; and I must mention once for all, that these Directions are only calculated for those, whose tenderness of Skin requires every Method than can be devised, to lessen the Pain of an Operation, which Custom renders necessary so

C

often



often to repeat. I shall finish this Chapter by observing, that a very small Quantity of Water will suffice to make a Lather with the Powder, (so much thereof as may be contained on a Shilling being only used at a Time) and the worst Circumstance that can attend it, is, its being too much liquified.



### CHAP. III.

O F

#### R A Z O R S T R A P S,

A N D T H E

#### *Method of Using them.*

**H**AVING already given Directions for the Choice of Razors, and spoken of the Properties of Sope, as well in the Substance as Powder, nothing now is wanting to complete the Equipage but the Addition of a RAZOR STRAP: On this Subject I rather choose to Reason than Direct; and therefore shall be satisfied in giving only a few Intimations of what should be avoided, without particularising any one Sort



as intituled to a Preference; and I hope by this Method, to escape being suspected by my Brethren, of insinuating the Excellencies of those I make myself, above all others.

Amidst the vast Variety of this Commodity, it can hardly be supposed but that there is a Difference in point of Value; yet among so many eminent Geniuses, who have bent their Pursuits in the Discovery of a Nostrum for quickening the Edge of a Razor, it would require more than the Portion of one Man's Understanding, to decide to whom the Preference is due; and as this Study is become so general, as to engage the Attention of Men of all Professions; I apprehend that we shall scarcely ever survive the Revolution of the Moon, without being absorbed in Wonder at some new emerged Philosopher, on account of his interesting Discoveries in this Science; and in a Knowledge that increases so fast, it is better to suspend One's Judgment about the Merits of those whose Attentions are devoted to it, least at the Termination of every Month, we should find as much Reason to change our Opinion, as we did before to embrace it.

I apprehend the Reason why this Knowledge increases so much faster than any other, is that the Study of it is connected with almost every sort of Business alike; insomuch that as yet, it is not clearly decided, whether the manual

Operations of the Powder-Puff, the Mystery of Mop-making, or the manufacturing of Cabinets, convey the greater Degree of Intuition in this Science.

Nay, so great is the Desire Men have of extending this Knowledge, that their Principles seem no less affected than their Professions; thus we find, the *Jews* have made it a Point of Duty to accommodate the *Christians* in this Particular. How admirable it is, to behold the Talents of Pomatum & Razor-Strap-making, both shine forth in the Mind of a learned *Hebrew*!

It was not my Intention to satyrize on this Occasion, but the Subject seemed so aptly adapted for it, that I was led to it in a Manner without my own Consent; and this I hope will excuse me to the Reader, for the Liberty I have taken with his Time.

I cannot help reflecting with some Concern, on the Supineness of the Razor Makers in general, who have tamely yielded up a Branch of Business (which apparently belonged to them) to the Management of every idle Professor; nay even become Customers to the very People who have pirated this Branch out of their Hands.

Nothing to be sure can be more reasonable, than to suppose, that they who are the actual Makers of Razors, are those who ought to be, and are best informed of what is most beneficial to their Edges; and I make no doubt, that a proper

proper Exertion among the Razor-Makers in this Respect, would very soon be countenanced by the Favor of the Public.

I will not deny, that a Man of any Profession who has made Metals his Study, and who has acquired a Knowledge of the Properties of Steel, may very likely hit upon a Composition that may answer the Purpose, and if this be the Case of any of the Gentlemen, who have set forth the Infallibility of their Inventions in this Respect in the Daily Papers, I will not disprove their Qualifications; but shall insist, that a Man will hardly be lucky enough to fix on a Composition exactly suited to a Razor, who is not thoroughly acquainted with the Properties of its Substance, and the Nature of its Temper.

If the Composition with which a Strap is prepared, be of too eating a Quality, its Nature approaches too near that of a Hone; which, tho' it never fails to give a quick keen Edge, scarcely ever affords that smoothness and solidity which are essential, not only to its cutting pleasantly, but also to its Duration.

It will require equal Caution however, to avoid the other Extreme; for if the Composition be too soft and ineffectual, it will be altogether as bad; and instead of making an Edge to a Razor, will deprive it of what it may have had before; and it is a Maxim, in this Particular commonly true, that what does no good to a Razor, seldom fails to do it harm. Next



ri Next to the Composition, the Leather claims our Attention ; which should not be too rough lest it set in Waves on the Surface, and thereby act unequally on the Edge ; nor too compacted, lest it forbid the Admission of so much of the Composition as is necessary to meliorate its Nature.

It has of late been very common with some Makers, to leave the Wood, on which the Leather is fixed, sufficiently thin, so as to render it elastic ; upon a Supposition, that this yielding Quality is very assistant in making a fine round Edge : I cannot help thinking however, that this is a mistaken Notion, for as the Leather with a proper Composition will always be sufficiently elastic and susceptible of Pressure, to reach the utmost extremity of an Edge, the rest can only serve to round the Razor sooner than need be, and make it require grinding before its Time. The ill Effect of such Straps upon fresh ground Razors (whose Edges are always very tender) is much to be apprehended, and I very much doubt, if the Razor was not applied with the greatest Caution, but its convexity would be so far increased, as scarcely to come under the Denomination of an Edge : I will not deny but that such Straps may have their Use, when a Razor has attained a very great thickness about the Edge ; but as Gentlemen's Razors are seldom in this Condition, so their superior Utility will very rarely appear.

In



In Strapping a Razor it is necessary to observe, that the thick or hinder Part bears upon the Strap at the same Time the Edge does; for if the Back is raised, the Hand looses its only Guide, and in that Case it could not fail of receiving an Injury; but if the Razor is applied flat and the Strap a proper one, ten or twelve Strokes on each Side of the Blade, will be sufficient to encrease its sharpness.

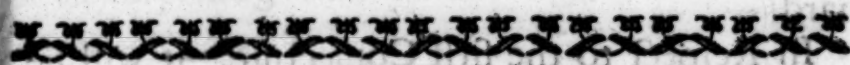
I have always given Directions to draw the Razor downwards, from the Termination of the Edge to the Point, having experienced that this is the most steady Manner the Hand can act in; and it is an Observation pretty well established, that any Thing may be drawn to a much greater exactness than it can be shoved; and in the present Case, was a Razor to be pushed upwards along the Strap, that is, from the Point to the Termination of the Edge, there would be some Danger of its turning on the Rivet, and cutting both the Leather and the Fingers. To be as secure as possible in this Respect, it will be well to place the Hold just above the Rivet, grasping at the same Time the Handle and that part of the Blade which issues from it.

Some have approved this Manner of strapping Razors from other Motives, & have judged, that drawing the Razor downwards had such an Effect upon the Particles which form  
the

the Edge, as to direct their Points upwards, in the same Situation in which the Teeth of a Saw are formed : I cannot for my own Part conceive, nor have I (notwithstanding many Examinations) found, that wearing away some Particles of Steel, can influence the Shape of those which remain behind ; nor am I inclinable to judge, that Steel (especially when hardened) can be moved otherwise than by being removed : I will not pretend however, to much certainty in this Respect ; and most likely those who are of a contrary Opinion, have had the Opportunity of very nice Observations to fix their Judgments ; be the Fact as it may, the Effect I fancy will not be found of much Consequence ; for those who find a Difference in directing the Razor upwards or downwards upon the Face, must possess the Sense of feeling in a very eminent Degree.

The Manner in which a Strap (properly prepared) acts upon a Razor, must necessarily form an Edge most suitable for the Purpose, as it does not wear it away so fast as the Hone, nor confine its Effect intirely to a Flat ; for by the gentle Manner in which it performs, and being (as was before observed) in some measure yielding to Pressure, it cannot leave that raggedness upon the Edge, which the Hone on account of its Quickness and the solidity of its Surface, is commonly found to produce ; at least according to the

the general Method of using it, of which I shall speak hereafter.



## CHAP. IV.

O F

Dipping a R A Z O R into *Hot-Water*.

**T**HIS appears to have been an antient and general Practice, and many pretend to have discovered the Benefit of it: It is not my Intention to discountenance an Assertion, which is delivered with such an Appearance of Certainty, or in any Measure to Dispute the Reality of the Advantage it is said to procure; however, it will be permitted me (tho' it may not convey any Instructions to others) to enquire into this Phenomenon, whereby perhaps, I may be favoured myself with some Information from those better acquainted with the Subject.

There are, as I can judge, only two Effects that can be produced by this Method; the one, that the Heat of the Water insinuates itself through the Pores of the Razor, and agreeable to it's natural Property of Expansion, dilates

D

it's



it's Particles; the other, that it is in a Manner, a sort of renewing the Temper which the Workman first gave it after it was rendered hard.

In Respect to the first Conjecture, it will be scarcely doubted, but that the Particles of the Steel may be enlarged by the Heat of the Water: but I apprehend, it will be very difficult to prove, that this Enlargement of Particles does conduce to the rendering the Edge more active or keen. It is always acknowledged (and the Glass will sufficiently prove it) that the finest Termination Steel will admit of, is no more than a ragged Border of unconnected Particles, or in other Words, a real Saw, tho' not discernable by the natural Sight: Hence it seems reasonable to imagine, that the smaller the Teeth are, and the closer they unite, the smoother they will cut; and therefore I hope, it will appear pardonable in me to think, that the Operation can not be benefited by the Edge being rendered more coarse.

And further, if the Dilatation be general (as seems reasonable to suppose) it will affect the Particles every Way, and therefore that Edge which was made very thin, and as it was, lost itself with Respect to Substance, by Means of the Hone or Strap, will obtain by Virtue of the Heat, a Degree of Breadth; and should the Multitude of small Points that form the Edge, become

become flat, or rather round, it would be a little surprising that its cutting Quality should be increased.

I am equally doubtful with Regard to the other Conjecture, *viz.* " That putting a Razor " into hot Water, is in a Manner a sort of " renewing the Temper which the Workman " gave it after it was rendered hard ;" admitting this was true, (which however seems to be otherwise) it would follow, that the Razor in its primal State was too hard, and therefore required softening to make it perform the better ; and if dipping it in hot Water had the Power to lessen its Quality of Hardness, we may very aptly conclude, that this being repeated, would at last alter its Condition intirely ; and that in the Course of a Winter, a Razor would become as soft as when it left the Anvil, and consequently useless ; which is not the Case ; it being well known that a Razor, even after much Wear, is better than when new.

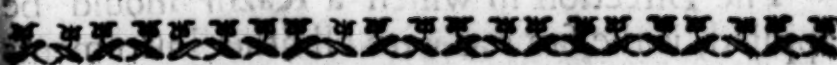
I have taken Notice of these two Considerations only, having never heard any other assigned ; and not being Master of Philosophy enough to suggest any new one upon the Subject : I will not deny however, that from some other Cause in Nature which I want Penetration to discover, it is probable this Effect may be produced ; for it seems next to impossible, that so many should

be mistaken, who think they have experienced the Utility of the Process; and therefore I would not be thought to decry a Practice which Experience seems to approve; especially as my want of Understanding, may perhaps, be the only Circumstance that puts it beyond my Conception,

Tho' I do not pretend to decide concerning the Benefit a Razor may receive by being dipped into hot Water; I am however very certain, that the Strap may gain an Advantage from the Warmth of the Razor, more especially in cold Weather; when it is observable, that the Ingredients with which Straps are prepared, become so very hard, as scarcely to have any Effect on the Edge; therefore the Warmth of a Razor after having been dipped in hot Water, cannot fail to soften its Texture and renew its Virtue; some Moderation notwithstanding must be used, for if it be too much heated, it will so far soften the Composition, as to cause it to clog and stick to the Razor in passing over it.

C H A P.





## CH A P. V.

O F

### Applying a R A Z O R.

**H**AVING treated on every Thing necessary to complete the Equipage, and given Directions for strapping a Razor, I am now naturally led, to speak of the Manner in which its Application may receive the greatest Assistance.

Nothing is more evident, than that the same Instrument in different Hands, will vary considerably in its Performance; and whatever other Reasons may be assigned for this Difference, I am inclin'd to believe that Management is most commonly the Cause. As Handiness cannot be considered as a Concomitant of mental Perfection, (the wisest Men being often deficient in it) so it should not give any one Offence, to suppose him wanting in this Respect, especially as the Remedy in this Case will often require nothing more than his Consideration, which he has only neglected from the triflingness of the Subject.

The

The Direction in which a Razor should be applied, is the same as with all other Instruments intended to cut: for Example, if we consider in what Manner a Knife will best effect its Purpose with a Stick, we shall find it will be by directing the Edge exactly in a Line with the Back; this is equally necessary to observe, whether the Intention be to go deep or cut superficially; thus if the Rind or Bark only is to be taken off, the Knife in that case should act almost flat, for if it was raised too much, one of these Inconveniencies would follow; either the Bark would be scraped off by a transverse Stroke of the Edge, (much to the Detriment of its Sharpness) or by pursuing the first Rule, of letting the Back follow in a Line with the Edge, the Incision would be much too deep for what was intended to be cut.

In like Manner with Respect to a Razor, if it be conducted too flat, it does not attack the Hair where it is most capable of Resistance, which is at the Root, and therefore it evades the Edge by bending down before it; and by this Method it perhaps will be necessary to carry the Razor over the Part five or six Times, to take off that Quantity of Hair, which, admitting the Instrument was properly directed, would be much better done by a single Stroke. With Regard to the other Extreme, if the Back of the Razor be too much elevated, and directed in a Line  
with

with the Edge, it does not then appear intended so much to cut the Hair as the Face, which will prove the worst Evil of the too, as it certainly will be thought better to leave some Hair on the Chin, than remove it at the Expence of One's Flesh; If, tho' the Razor be held nearly perpendicular, yet at the same Time, the Edge and Back do not act in a Line, the Danger then of cutting the Skin will be as little to be apprehended, as the Probability of shaving clean, or without giving Pain; the Razor in such Case, only acting as a Scraper, whereby it can no less fail to fret the Skin, than to destroy its own Edge.

I have before observed, that I did not consider it very material, whether the Razor was directed upwards or downwards, as not conceiving that the Particles pointed themselves more one Way than the other; I would have it remembered however, that it is extremely necessary to choose one of the Methods; for if (as has been mentioned) the Edge is formed of small Points or Teeth, they cannot act to any Advantage, without they follow each other; which will be pretty evident, when we consider the Action of a Saw, whose Teeth tho' pressed on any ligneous Substance, will do very little towards its Separation, but once pushed forward will immediately cut what it is employed upon; and thus a Razor if held perpendicularly, may be moderately pressed on the Hand, without any Fear



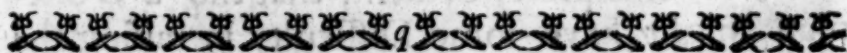
of cutting the Part, but if the least Assistance be given it to act, if it be drawn or forwarded in however small a Degree, it will directly make its Way through the Flesh; hence it will appear, that it is really necessary to direct the Razor either upwards, or the contrary, in order to afford its Edge the full Power of Action.

Having mentioned the Inconveniencies arising from an injudicious Method of directing the Razor, it now becomes necessary to point out, in what Manner its Application may be most certain of Success; and since it appears, that to hold it too flat or too elevated, is improper for the Purpose, I must recommend a Medium between the two Extremes, which I am persuaded, will always be most eligible; for then, the Edge need not attack sideways as a Scraper, for Fear of wounding the Face, or frontways so horizontally, as to miss the Root of the Beard.

It is extremely difficult to give precise Directions in Matters depending principally upon Self Conception, for where the Circumstances of Management are very minute, it becomes almost as impossible as it would be tiresome, to descend into every Particular. The greatest Advantage therefore that can arise from this Chapter, is, that it may raise some sort of Consideration in those, who have hitherto neglected the Subject, by which perhaps, they will be much better informed, than in any Thing I might add on this Head.

I will

I will conclude this Chapter by observing, that it is always best (where the tenderness of the Skin does not forbid it) to let the Razor meet the Hair, or (as most commonly expressed) to shave against the Grain; for there is a Particularity observable with Respect to the Beard, that where it is most capable of Resistance, it is always easiest overcome; its Opposition serving no other Purpose than to facilitate its Removal: It is on this Account, that that Part over which the Razor is to pass, should be stretched moderately tight by a convenient Disposition of the Fingers, which in a Manner fixing the Hair, gives the Razor the best Opportunity of acting to Advantage.



## C H A P. VI.

O F

### Grinding a R A Z O R.

**G**RINDING a Razor is a Work of much Nicety, and I can venture to say, that few Men are capable of giving a Razor this Reparation properly, except those who are thoroughly

roughly able to make one ; but unluckily, the Price for this Work is so very small, that many are obliged to give it to their most ordinary Workmen, who on Account of their Inability, are entituled to very low Wages, and who, upon the whole, are not capable of grinding an Edge to any Degree of exactness, which however is very essential to the Instrument now spoke of, and without which it is hardly possible to set it on the Hone, in a Manner that may insure its cutting well.

For my own Part I have been so well convinced of this, and that it was impossible to do my Employer Justice, without being myself a Loser, that I ventured to violate a Custom which seemed not only my Foe, but the Public's likewise ; for it is pretty evident, that tho' a Workman might have some Difficulty in raising the Price, which perhaps was settled a hundred Years past, and therefore be induced to continue it as he found it ; yet notwithstanding, he would not often put up with the Loss ; and the Time of a good Workman would seldom be employed in grinding Razors at two Pence each.

The Fear of being suspected of imposing on the Public, and of disobliging my Customers, prevented me for a long Time from my Intention of doubling the Price : I knew what I had to overcome, and was not without my Apprehensions, that some of my Brethren who would  
not



not choose to do the same, might seize on that Occasion to make Insinuations to my disadvantage; I take this Opportunity however to acknowledge, that this has not happened; and I should think myself very deficient in Point of Candor, not to declare the Injustice of my Suspicions on that Account.

I apprehend, that at the Time the Price was fixed for grinding Razors, which (tho' it would be difficult to ascertain the Date) was undoubtedly a great many Years ago, a Master might afford to allot this Branch to his best Workman, and be a sufficient Gainer by the Business; as the Journeyman's Pay then, bore no Proportion to what it now is, and every Necessary of Life was considerably cheaper: This appears so plain an Argument in Favor of increasing the Price for this Branch, as well as for almost every other (most indeed have, and still do increase Yearly) that I need not say any more in Defence of it; as dwelling on a Subject so manifest in itself, might be considered as trespassing on my Reader's Time, or implying his Want of Discernment: I therefore will only observe, that a Work of any Degree of Nicety, in which two Men must necessarily be employed, can hardly, in the Estimation of any reasonable Person, take so little Time, or require so small Attention, as to be afforded for the Price of *Two Pence*; and I beg Permission to say, that the

Man who cannot fairly earn Four Pence in grinding a Razor, and making it fit for Use, must be very deficient in his Business, and whom I should greatly suspect of being over paid, in receiving only half the Price.



## CHAP. VII.

O F

### SETTING a RAZOR.

**G**RINDING a Razor well, is certainly very essential to its receiving a proper Edge from the Hone ; but if the Workman's Abilities are defective in this last Operation of Setting, his former Time may be considered as thrown away, as it is in no Condition for Use (however well ground) till it is properly set ; Grinding being only the reducing the Thickness of the Razor, and wearing the Edge to a Degree of Exactness, as may render it capable to receive the Benefit of the Hone ; this last Business therefore, is of the greatest Consequence, the Performance of the Instrument depending principally upon it.

After

After a Razor is ground, its thinnest Part is perfectly ragged, as neither the Stone or Emery can wear it away, without occasioning a considerable roughness upon the Edge; the Intention therefore of Setting a Razor, is to take away its ragged Border, and give it a smooth and more resistable Termination; this is sometimes effected by one Setting, but at others, according to the Strength of the Beard it engages with, will require a second or third Tryal, after which the Strap should be the only Assistance given it.

Why I am for allowing a Razor to be repeatedly Sett after Grinding, is from this Consideration, that till the Edge has acquired a certain Solidity, it seldom performs well, and it would be very tedious to wait the Effect of Strapping; for while the Edge is tender (which it always is when fresh ground) it must be applied very moderately on the Leather; so that it would require a length of Time, that cannot often be spared, to strengthen the Edge by Means of a Strap, which is very soon done with the Hone; this Moderation, which should be observed in Strapping a fresh Ground Razor, is the more necessary, as otherwise, the Strap being very susceptible of Pressure, would in a Manner encompass the Edge, and thereby deprive it of too much of its Keennefs.

Tho' it appears, that there are Circumstances which may render it necessary for a Gentleman  
to



to have a Hone in his Possession, yet in general I am persuaded, a good Strap is the only Thing required; and as its Use is much easier attained than that of the Hone, it undoubtedly deserves the Preference; more especially as the principal Occasion for, and Nicety in Setting, is immediately after Grinding, which always therefore falls to the Workman; however, for the Instruction of those Gentlemen, who may choose to be acquainted with the Manner of setting a Razor, I shall give the following Directions.

I must be permitted on this Occasion, to make some Observations on a Rule, that is considered as infallible; and to deviate from which, is violating what has been successively approved for Ages. If I am happy enough however, in giving sufficient Reasons for a Particularity I am about to advance, I shall think myself perfectly secure of the Approbation of those, who have a sufficient Discernment, not to affix an unalterable Opinion to a Custom, from no other Motive than its Antiquity.

The Manner of Setting a Razor, as I have constantly heard prescribed, is to apply it flat on the Hone, observing (as was said before with Respect to the Strap) that the Back and Edge touch at the same Time. Surely a Man without the Assistance of a supernatural Genius, may easily perceive, that tho' this may sometimes be a proper Direction, it cannot however be always  
so.

So. I think I may venture to say, it can very seldom take Place, as the Circumstance that gives it Propriety, is very rarely found; it depending upon the thickness of the Back being exactly proportioned to the Breadth of the Razor; which to be rendered intirely convenient to the Hone, would be either very massy or very narrow; otherwise, the Edge could not (by flat setting) be rendered sufficiently obtuse, to perform its Business a single Time, much less retain its Condition.

It is very evident, that admitting this Manner of setting Razors was proper, with Respect to those which had thick Backs, it must be quite the reverse with those of a thin make. Hence it appears, how injudicious it is, to lay it down as a general Rule; for the very Circumstance that renders it eligible in the one Case, intirely oversets it in the other; and I cannot help thinking, that a Workman will be always nearer the Right, in consulting his own Judgment in this Matter, than in trusting indiscriminately on the Thickness of the Razor he has to Set. I will not insist, that it may be always necessary to raise the Back the whole Time of Setting, but am convinced, that there are very few Occasions where it may be dispensed with in the finishing Strokes: It must be acknowledged however, that the Hand must be very steady, and not at all subject to vary in its Direction of a Razor, that is applied

applied on the Edge only; for otherwise, the Inconveniencies in this Method, would be worse than those it was intended to avoid in the other; just in as great a Proportion, as a sort of Edge is better than no Edge at all; a short Practice however, and a little Consideration, will very soon overcome every Difficulty.

It may very likely be asked, how I came to give Directions for Strapping a Razor, precisely in the Manner which I condemn in Setting? to this I reply, It is on Account of the Difference of their Natures, the Hone being a solid unyielding Substance, and the Strap (as has been before observed) an elastic one: so that it is as impossible the Strap should make a flat Edge, as it is (allowing the Razor is applied Back and Edge) the Hone should make a round one.

If a Hone be of a proper Temper, the Stress in Setting need be very slight, as the Razor will cling to it, in a Manner which will wear the Edge away so fast, that very little Force will be necessary. It is impossible to say, how much Time should be allowed in this Business; a very smooth Edge being sometimes obtained by Setting, in a third of the Time that it can at others; and I have myself produced an Edge to a Razor in Ten Minutes, as much to my Satisfaction, as at another Time, with all my Attention, I have been able to do in Thirty.

Thus having executed my Intention of giving  
Directions



Directions in every Article relative to Shaving, and, conscious of my Inability as a Writer, I cannot think of any Thing more needful to add, than to intreat my Reader's Excuse, for the Inaccuracies he must necessarily have discovered in the foregoing Pages ; I say necessarily, knowing how impossible it is, for a Man of no greater Education than myself, to be either very pleasing in his Stile, or exact in his Grammar ; convinced of this, nothing should have influenced me to the Undertaking, but the immediate Connection the Subject had with my Business ; which, however badly qualified I was to express, seemed notwithstanding, to fall within my Province, and the more so, as being of a Nature too inconsiderable to claim the Pen of the Learned.

F I N I S.

Questions in every Article relative to Shaving,  
and, conscious of my inability as a Writer, I  
cannot think of any thing more needful to a dis-  
cussion to interest my Reader's Excuse, for the In-  
stances he must necessarily have discovered in  
the foregoing Pages. I say necessarily, know-  
ing how impossible it is for a Man of no greater  
Education than myself, to be either very pleas-  
ing in his Style, or exact in his Grammar; con-  
fessed of this, nothing should have influenced  
me to the Undertaking, but the immediate Con-  
nection the Subject had with my Business;  
which, however, I was to expect, I within my Pro-  
vince, and the Possession of a Manuscript of the  
Pen of the



E I N I S

